2: Villiers T-5 (1938-39) 1948 MK2 Maritime Arabs MK2
Kuwait MI1

K MA 505 525

Negro origin, the descendants of slaves, though not now slaves themselves. Many others are of Iranian origin. Almost none are Bedouin, for the Arab Bedouin is not a seafaring man. In Kuwait, the callings open to the low-class Iranian are restricted to portering, pearling (either as diver or as tender), and sailing. Both Iranians and Negroes work splendidly, are loyal, competent, and well disciplined.

MA 565 426 465 228 428

As the *nakhoda* class is tied to the merchant by a structure of debt, so also are the sailors tied to the *nakhoda* class in the same way. All deep-sea sailing is paid for on a shares system, and there are no wages. Often the *nakhoda* of the deep-sea dhow has an interest in a pearling vessel (though not now to anything like the same extent as in former years), and the sailor may be bound to him through pearling debts, either his own or inherited. The more iniquitous practices in the pearling business structure have long been on the way out, largely because of the excellent example set at Bahrein, but the debt tradition stands and is almost impossible to eradicate.

MA 505 511 342 291 515 501 565

The sailors go to sea because they know no other life, and they make a wretched living by incredibly difficult methods. They have no possessions other than the clothes they stand in, and one or two spare gowns, a good headcloth, and a few sarongs. Their toothbrush is the twig of a tree; their ablutions are made five times daily at a mosque well, or in the sea; they know no shelter and rarely have a bed. The younger seamen, I have noticed, often have no home other than the *suq*, or native bazaar, where they coil down in their rough cloaks for a night's sleep on a bench in a cheap coffee shop, or in the sand. At sea, they stretch out on the deck, beneath the stars, for there is no such thing as accommodation for the seamen or anyone else in most dhows. The officers and the more important merchants live on a bench round the wheel, in the stern of the ship; the seamen lie down anywhere.

MA 565 554 165

What keeps the seaman a disciplined and more or less contented worker is his hope of reward, principally from smuggling or his own ventures, and his ambition to get hold of a tiny shop in the *suq* of his home town. This is an ambition he rarely achieves. His more usual fate is to die young, especially if he be also a pearl diver.